

## JONATHAN'S FOURTH OF JULY.

*(A Story which needs no Pictures.)*

BY ELIZABETH CUMINGS.

"LET'S have a clappin' band," said Jonathan Gray, to the five little boys who sat beside him on the parsonage fence. "Jimmy can lead, an' we know 'The Girl I Left Behind Me,' best."

"An' le's whistle, too," said Willy Brown, a very small boy, with very red hair, and a multitude of freckles. "An' Theo White, you can drum if you can't whistle."

"Mebbe," said Jimmy Bates, "if we have a good band, we can have a celebration the Fourth of July. Just as boys, you know, in somebody's back yard."

The fence was very old-fashioned. Tilda, Jonathan's six-year-old sister, said it looked like a long string of capital X's, and that was a good description of it. The broad board that finished the top made a comfortable seat, which was high up and sightly, and so was especially adapted for boys. Each one of the six who then sat upon it had two flat sticks painted black, which he called "clappers," and at a signal from Jimmy Bates who sat next Jonathan, and was his particular friend, each one began to clap, and puckering up his rosy mouth, whistled as well as he was able, "The Girl I Left Behind Me," Theodore White alone excepted, and he executed a marvelous tattoo on the top of the fence with his fists.

"Well, boys," cried Mr. Gray from his study window, "what do you call this?"

"A clappin' band, papa," replied Jonathan. "An' we're getting ready to keep the Fourth of July."

In two minutes Mr. Gray was leaning on the fence, and the way his eyes twinkled through his spectacles made Willie Brown conclude that once, a very long time ago, the minister must have been a very jolly boy.

"If you want to celebrate," said he, "suppose you play you are a militia company, and train."

None of the boys understood what training meant; but when Mr. Gray had explained it, they were so delighted they all got on the fence and hurraed, and Willy Brown was not satisfied until he had done six somersaults, he felt so happy.

It was the second of July. If it had been the first

the boys would have blown up with impatience before the Fourth. They met in the back yard of the parsonage the next morning after breakfast, and Mr. Gray, armed with a closed umbrella, taught them to march, and to shoulder and present arms. Each boy's mamma promised him a hat which should be a marvel of red, white and blue paper; each boy's papa promised him at least two bunches of fire crackers, and Mr. Gray spent the whole afternoon in fashioning six very harmless guns out of old broomsticks.

The celebration was to come off in the parsonage yard. Mr. Gray made a nice tent for small people by covering the clothes-horse with canvas. Near it he placed a dry-goods box covered with old carpet. That was to be the platform, where Jackson Brown, Willy's brother, aged thirteen, was to deliver an original speech. Mrs. Gray baked an immense number of ginger cookies, and bought a box of lemons. First the clapping band was to perform, then came the speech, and the parade of the "Invincibles," as Mr. Gray called them, then refreshments. Everything promised to be delightful.

But the night of the third Jonathan went to bed very thoughtful. He remembered what his father had entirely forgotten, viz., that the Invincibles had no captain. On the Fourth, Mr. Gray was to sit on the back verandah with Mrs. Gray and Tilda, and direct things, and some one must take his place at the head of the company. Jonathan was certain nobody could do it so well as he could; besides he was sure he would look the best. Hannah had so colored an old white ostrich feather, it was like a flag, red, white and blue, and she had curled it most gracefully around the side of his tall paper hat, and upon the top of it she had fastened a big bunch of white feathers she pulled out of the white bantam rooster's tail. His mamma had trimmed a red merino scarf with fringe made of gilt paper, and that was to be tied about his waist, and upon the shoulders of his jacket she had sewed some real captain's stripes, cut from one of papa's old army coats. But the celebration was to be held at the parsonage, and Jonathan could scarcely



reconcile his being captain with his teachings upon politeness. Whether he would have to be a private, was a point which troubled him very much, and he dared not speak of it lest his father should decide against him at once. The morning of the Fourth dawned clear and hot. Jonathan was up at five o'clock, and to relieve his impatience sat on the orchard fence ringing an old dinner bell till breakfast. At eight o'clock the six members of the clapping band sat under the clothes-horse tent, and vainly tried to practice "The Girl I Left Behind Me," till ten, the hour Mr. Gray had set for the exercises.

"Oh, hum-a-day!" groaned Willy Brown at last, "I think it's just awful to have to wait for things to begin."

"Ain't it!" said Jonathan. "There's nothing harder, 'cept waiting for 'em to stop. Sometimes," here he looked cautiously toward the house, "I've wished awfully papa didn't preach, cause then, when it's so hard for me to wait for meetin' to stop, mebber I could go home and have something to eat."

"You'd have to stay just the same," said Bobby Graves, a very serious and pale boy. "I know just how you feel. I feel it this morning. It's a sort of biting and squirming inside you, so you can't keep still."

Ten o'clock came at last. The back verandah was full of little girls all dressed in white, and the clothes-horse tent was crowded with boys. The six drawn up in front of the dry-goods box felt a little nervous and of immense consequence.

"Are we all ready?" asked Mr. Gray.

"Yes, sir," cried the whole company.

Jimmy Bates took one step forward and cried, "Now!" explosively, and the band began whistling, clapping and drumming at a great rate, for Theodore had a real drum for the occasion, and did himself credit.

"The Girl I Left Behind Me," was so enthusiastically received, it had to be immediately repeated; then the band sat down on the grass, and the orator of the day mounted the platform.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he began. The little girls giggled and confused him, so he began again:

"Fellow citizens — this is a great occasion, an occasion which — is an occasion."

(Mr. Gray started a round of applause, which was given with spirit.)

"Our fathers fit, bled and died to free this country, and they did it. My great-grandfather fit in the Rev-

olution, and maybe your grandfathers did. Anyways the Britishers were whipt.

"There's no telling what may happen in the future time (great applause from Mr. Gray). Nobody knows but some boy here may git to be President of the United States. Therefore we ought to know something of the cause for which our fathers fit, and bled, and died, and what a President ought to do. My father says Washington and Lincoln are two of the greatest men who ever lived, so let's give three cheers for each of 'em and I'm done."

After the cheers which were very hearty, the clapping band performed, "The Girl I Left Behind Me," by special request. The parade was the next thing on the programme.

"I declare," cried Mr. Gray as the boys came forward, "you haven't any captain."

Immediately six pair of eyes said imploringly, "Me! Me!"

Mr. Gray glanced up and down the line; Theodore White stood up so straight he looked half a head taller than the rest, and at his side dangled a large wooden sword.

"Oh, papa!" cried Jonathan, his face as red as fire, "papa!"

That unlucky speech decided the matter. Laying his hand on Theodore's shoulder, Mr. Gray said, "Theodore, as you have a sword, and are a little taller than the rest, suppose you be the captain."

Theodore stepped forward triumphantly, and all the fire in Johnathan's face fled to his heart.

"I can train twice better'n him;" he said bitterly, and his father's command of "Silence," only made him feel more angry.

They went through various manœuvres, and after marching and counter-marching came up by the platform near which stood the refreshment table.

"Shoulder arms!" cried the captain standing at the head.

Jonathan who stood next, thought that Willie Brown who was at the foot, was not in line, and bent forward to see, when whack — across his back came the captain's wooden sword.

Forgetful of every thing but the mortification of that stinging blow, Jonathan tore the captain's hat in pieces, and then seizing him around the body, attempted to throw him down. The two boys swayed for a moment, and before Mr. Gray could come up and separate them, both plunged head-first into the big tub full of lemonade.



There was a short stay of proceedings, as the lawyers say, then Mr. Gray came out and invited the company to play, "I'm On The King's Land," while more lemonade was making. When all was again ready Theodore and Jonathan made their appearance with very red noses, and very red eyes, and the following dialogue took place.

*Captain Theodore*: "I'm sorry I slapped you."

*Jonathan*: "I'm sorry I pitched into you and tore your hat."

Tilda who was not entirely satisfied with these apologies, spoke up shrilly, "Who is sorry for spoiling the lemonade?" and then everybody laughed.

There were about three bushels of ginger cookies eaten, and the tub full of lemonade was every bit

consumed. Fire crackers fizzed and banged till half-past twelve, when, after the clapping band had again performed, "The Girl I Left Behind Me," and Mr. Gray had made a few remarks, briefly explaining the events the day commemorated, the children were dismissed.

"Tilda," said Jonathan as they sat on the back veranda after supper, "I wish I was a nation, an' Theo' White was another nation."

"Why?" asked Tilda.

"Because," was the reply, "if a boy plagues a boy, he's got to stand it, and can't do nothin' back. It's wicked. But if I'd been America this morning an' Theo'd been England, I could have given him fits — yes, an' been celebrated for it."

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## IF WISHES WERE HORSES!

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BY M. E. B.

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"IF wishes were horses," dearie,  
 How fast and how far we'd ride  
 On our beautiful snow-white chargers,  
 Bounding with life and pride;  
 Straight as the flight of an arrow,  
 Swift as the flash of a spear,  
 We'd travel forever and ever,  
 — "If wishes were horses," dear!

To the tops of the sunset mountains  
 E'er they flicker and fade away,  
 To the dusky halls of the twilight,  
 To the flush of the new-born day,  
 To the silent stars of midnight  
 As they shine in the darkness clear,  
 We'd ride like the flight of a fancy,  
 — "If wishes were horses," dear!

Through billows of western prairies,  
 And dazzle of arctic plains,  
 Through perfume of southern roses,  
 And mists of the sweet spring rains;  
 Abreast of the echoing thunder,  
 With the quiver of lightning near,  
 We'd ride in the van of the tempest,  
 — "If wishes were horses," dear!

And into the lives we cherish,  
 To brighten their clouded skies,  
 Bring smiles to the sweet, pale faces,  
 And light to the saddened eyes;  
 To bring them a message of comfort,  
 And whisper a word of cheer,  
 Oh, how we would gallop and gallop,  
 — "If wishes were horses," dear!